



LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

75th Year

8 OCTOBER 1976

3,891

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TLS

THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

FRIDAY • 15 OCTOBER 1976 • No 3,892 • 20p

The double life of Trafalgar Square

Lord Home; Park Top;
Benny Andersen

Malcolm Bradbury on Little Magazines

'The File on the Tsar'
'Moscow Farewell'

Lewis Mumford and the machine age

Henri Michaux; Byron;
Army coups in Africa

The Marxism of Marxism



"El Negro-Raul,"
Arturo Lanteri. © El Hogar.

El Negro Raul, an Argentinian comic-strip hero, from The World Encyclopedia of Comics edited by Maurice Horn (785pp with 800 illustrations. New English Library, £19.95). Raul, drawn by Arturo Lanteri in the Buenos Aires magazine El Hogar from 1916 to the early 1920s, is a victim of racism, living in poverty, with continually frustrated dreams of wealth and splendour.

Commentary:

Simon Schama on
Dutch art
The Other Women
of Sydney
The Pinewood story
Fiction: Robert Creeley;
Goodbye to Miss Marple

To the Editor

Ezra Pound

Sir—I was dismayed to see Bernard Bergonzi's totally uncritical remarks about Pound's "madness" (September 24). "In any ordinary sense of the word," writes Bergonzi, "Pound no doubt was mad." True enough. But in "any ordinary sense of this word," millions of people are mad. It is important that Bergonzi supports his view that Pound was mad by citing Italian officials who, in 1934 and 1941, declared Pound to be "mentally unbalanced" and "insane".

However, the real issue is not whether Pound was mad (in what ever sense of that term), but what individuals and institutions did or did not do to him in the name of that name. The Italian authorities that declared Pound insane did not lock him up in an insane asylum, whereas the American authorities did.

The Sixth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States guarantees persons accused of crime the right to a speedy and public trial. That amendment was designed to protect the dignity and rights of both honorable and dishonourable men, of the innocent as well as the guilty. The Constitution does not say that a person charged with a crime has a right to trial provided that he can prove his sanity to the satisfaction of his legal and psychiatric advisers. In short, Pound should have been tried in a court of law, instead of being tortured by the psychiatric institution.

Why was Pound incarcerated in an American mental hospital for thirteen and a half years? It could not have been simply because he was mad, since all the experts agree that he had been mad long before he was locked up at St Elizabeth's Hospital and was still mad when he was released. I suspect that Pound was deprived of his liberty through psychiatric because the law, judges, and psychiatrists in charge of his case had no more respect for the rule of law and the Constitution than Pound had. These authorities deprived Pound of his constitutional right to trial. They thus robbed him of his opportunity to prove his innocence and regain his liberty, and of his choice, if guilty, to accept the legal penalty for his crimes. They then insisted Pound further still by imprisoning him in an insane asylum and by subjecting him to official insanity, as he was in death. The Soviet, Chinese, and American psychiatrists in the West to which Pound was sent, the American use of psychiatry in the Pound case.

THOMAS SZASZ,
State University of New York,
Syracuse, New York 13210.

Sir—"The political profile" of Ezra Pound, *The Last Rover* by G. David Hayward, reviewed by Bernard Bergonzi (September 24), yet another book about Pound which fails to make any mention of the political epilogue while he was still expecting to end his days in St Elizabeth's Hospital, Washington.

As I related in my book *Prospero and Ariel*, the recording was made on December 3, 1956, in a room which had been made available to me by the hospital authorities. Pound made it at his own request, on my agreement that it should never be broadcast during his lifetime. He attached so much importance to this that at first he wanted "monogrammed" undertakings to be my solemn agreement. Finally, after much persuasion, he agreed to sign a "monogrammed" document which was called *Four Steps* and was signed to establish how and why he had first found himself at odds with American publishers and editors, and why he was now in St Elizabeth's Hospital. It was signed by Pound and without reference to his signature, less than 500 words, and lasting about twenty minutes. It was purely anecdotal and related what Pound called "four steps in my pilgrimage" from 1913 to 1955, ending up: "And that is why after two years of wandering, when I got home, I used it as a microphone."

Unlike much of his polemical writing, *Four Steps* was remarkable for its lack of rancour and its cheerful good sense. And in view of the fact, Pound was not mad at the time.

Inability to explain himself clearly and concisely at that time, it was significantly terse and lucid. It may not have excused the unwise things he had done, and made no attempt to do so. But it showed quite clearly how a sense of exasperation can quickly build up under bureaucratic bloody-mindedness.

As promised, when I returned to London, the recording was locked away to wait upon events. Eighteen months later came the news that the American government was to drop the charges against Pound—and finally, that he was to leave St Elizabeth's Hospital the following day. This was something that neither of us had foreseen, but it seemed to me right that the recording should now be broadcast. There was no time to obtain Pound's consent, and his London representative, A. V. Moore, could only point out that the decision to ignore my solemn undertaking was for me alone to make.

After much thought, I decided to do so. On April 22, 1958, Pound's release from St Elizabeth's was announced on the BBC Home Service in its nine o'clock news, which added that a recorded statement by him would be broadcast at the end of the bulletin in *At Home and Abroad*. Pound refused to make any statement to the Journalists waiting to interview him in Washington, the BBC was promptly rung by the London news agencies to inquire where and when the recording had been made. Since I was still without Pound's consent, that I had done the right thing in allowing *Four Steps* to be broadcast, my replies had to be vague and non-committal.

I explained to him by cable that I had acted at my own discretion, since I believed it in his own best interests that the statement should have been made public. And I was relieved and reassured by his answer a few days later: "OK for the *Times* and *Observer* that I was done without my explicit permission to use it or give it. Thanks for good judgment, yes and A.V.M.'s in the *Times*." This clearly confirmed that he had had no second thoughts as to the relevance of the recording from his own point of view.

Accordingly, it was re-broadcast on May 7 in the BBC Third Programme, this time with an explanatory billing in *Radio Times*. On that occasion, there were many letters from the public, remarking that Pound's attitude seemed entirely reasonable and that his statement showed no signs at all of mental confusion, let alone insanity. This response was strongly echoed in the *BBC* and *Radio Times* Report which followed the second transmission. In view of the fact that *Four Steps* was heard by millions of people in this country, it is surely time that it should be called to the attention of Pound scholars in America and elsewhere. Given permission by the Ezra Pound Literary Property Trust in Washington, there would seem to be no reason why the text should be published. Apart from my own transcript, the recording will exist in the BBC sound archive.

D. G. BRIDSON,
26 North Grove, London N6 4SL.

ERIC ADAMS is the author of *Francis Pound: Varieties of Poetic Land* (1975).
ANTHONY ADAMSON is a Lecturer in Modern European History at the University of Bradford.
G. E. ARNOLD is Professor of Italian at the University of York.
MARGARET BOWEN is the author of *Robert Browning* (1975).
MARGARET BRADBURY is the author of *You Are I Have Just Been* (1975).
ANTHONY BROWN is the author of *James Joyce's 'Ulysses'* (1975).
THOMAS BRUNSON is the author of *The Political Transformation of the American Catholic Church* (1974).
J. DONALDSON is a Fellow of the University of Oxford.

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'Alien Wisdom'

Sir—It would be futile to argue with Arnaldo Momigliano (Letters, October 5) on the intended point of his own book. I should like, however, to reply to his only specific complaint.

In my review I remarked that in his book Professor Momigliano incorrectly claimed that "not one of [Clearchus's] fragments alludes to Persian institutions." Professor Momigliano now claims, with much greater plausibility, that Clearchus did not systematically analyse Persian institutions. These two claims seem to me different. I stand by my remark.

Moreover the content of fragment 5, which Momigliano refers to as "upright" (see *Archivum* 11, 253), does not seem to me to lend to your rather seems to suggest, Jacoby, who accepted the genuineness of the fragment in his major discussion of Clearchus (Rendiconti dell'Istituto di Scienze, Lettere e Arti, 1907, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912, 1913, 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917, 1918, 1919, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937, 1938, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944, 1945, 1946, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 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The book is a most interesting one for the period for which John Lamphear's informants could give him family memories or even their own recollections. "Every schoolboy knows" of the great inderpest that was raging all over East Africa when the first European explorers came through the region, but few have heard little of the droughts and famines of the same period. The texts quoted here tell of these in poignant detail. The Jie's earlier experiences of "brown-skinned men"—Ethiopian and Swahili elephant-hunters—were not unhappy; after the Jie had been driven from their herds by working for them as guides and porters. They did not need their British tax collectors; nor did they earn the severe punitive treatment that the first British expeditions inflicted on them. But, although they doubtless were not slaves, they were in a humiliating position. Fighting must cease, not all lamentation that "we who had been warriors were made like women." Others said, "Peace came and the people were happy. Those were days of peace and ease." During the first years of the 1900's, when the British were raising the Jie from a tribe when Uganda became independent, but it seems that the Uganda army now has an effective presence in the country.

